

L.2

We practised this dialogue, reading it in pinyin and characters

- Nǐ hǎo Hello

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- Nǐ hǎo ma? How are you?

- Wǒ hěn hǎo, xièxiè nǐ. Nǐ ne? I'm fine, thank you. And you?

- Wǒ yě hěn hǎo. Zàijiàn. I'm also fine. Goodbye

- Zàijiàn Goodbye

Here's the same thing in Chinese characters

- 你好
- 你好
- 你好吗？
- 我很好，谢谢你。你呢？
- 我也很好。再见。
- 再见

Note that one character is like one syllable of sound in English.

We looked at the character 好 and the way it's composed of two components put close together. In this character, the two components (the bit on the left and the bit on the right) take up the same amount of space as a 1-component character: in other words 女 which, on its own means 'female' and 子 which, on its own, represents 'child' are written so that they are the same size as 好.

Woman:      女      nǚ

Child: 子 zǐ

Good: 好 hǎo

We learnt to pronounce the characters from 1 – 5

yī èr sān sì wǔ

We also learnt to recognise the character that means 'work' 工 and one which means 'king': 王

Wáng (one of the most common surnames in China)

Giving 'King' his precious stone makes the character for Jade: 玉 yù

Put the imperial jade in the centre of four borders and you have the character for country:

国 guó

The Chinese represent the word 'middle' with this character: 中 zhōng

The Chinese call their country: 'middle country' or:

中国 zhōngguó